

County & District Councillor’s Monthly Report Cllr. Jacqi Hodgson - Date: 2nd April 2024
Devon County Councillor for Totnes & Dartington
(incl. Harberton, Harbertonford, Staverton, Landscope & part of Berry Pomeroy)
South Hams District Councillor for Dartington & Staverton
SHDC Executive Portfolio Councillor for Waste and Composting

Devon County Council: key issues

DCC Cabinet meeting 13.03.24. Items discussed & decisions taken:
Flood Risk Management Action Plan 2024/25

A Report was discussed seeking approval for the budget allocations being made to support delivery of the Flood Risk Management Annual Action Plan for 2024/25 and to highlight the achievements of the team in delivering the 2023/24 Action Plan. The report also detailed the significant flooding that was experienced across Devon during 2023 and the effort from the team in supporting those affected communities, further emphasising the need for continued support and investment in flood risk management activities.

The significant flooding experienced in 2023 was the worst experienced since 2012 with over 400 properties suffering internal flooding following a number of very intense rainfall events during the year. The Council had carried out a thorough investigation of flood events, detailing the source and scale of the event and suggest actions that could be considered by the various Risk Management Authority (RMAs). It was accepted that major investment could take many years, and where possible, the Council looked for ‘quick win’ solutions within existing budgets and resources.

The financial headlines for 2024/25 are:

Item	Flood & Coastal Risk Management Revenue £'000	Flood & Coastal Risk Management Capital £'000	External Funding £'000	Total £'000
FCRM Resources	447	0	0	447
Local Improvements, Natural Flood Management, Maintenance & Contingency	115	0	0	115
Studies & Investigations	260	0	0	260
Capital Projects 2023/24	0	77	0	77
Capital Projects 2024/25	0	340	1,018	1,358
Devon Resilience Innovation Project (DRIP)	0	0	1,664	1,664
Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) Schedule 3 Implementation	124	0	0	124
Total Budget	946	417	2,682	4,045

Future of Learning Disability Services (Day Care) A report which proposed the closure of 5 of the current 8 sites operated by DCC.

The recommendation to close the services stemmed from a number of changes first introduced in 2014 and followed by various consultations, engagement strategies and service changes, with the most recent being in 2023. Integrated Adult Social Care remained committed to promoting an individual’s independence and their access to community opportunities to meet their varying needs in different ways. The COVID 19 pandemic had halted all provision of day services and when they recommenced, the numbers attending were very much lower than had been attending pre-pandemic. The Council currently operated 10 in-house day care services over eight sites. The number of eligible people accessing the Councils in-house learning disability day services had also reduced in the last eight years from 116 in 2015, to 85 in 2020. Current attendance was now at twelve people accessing four services (Abbey Rise, Nichols, Rosalind House, and Rushbrook).

Whilst all the alternatives were carefully the decision to cease providing day services from all six of the in-house day services in these five locations, was taken (lists (i) and (ii):

Rushbrook in Totnes will remain open to provide in-house day services

- (i) **Learning Disability Services**
 - a. Lyric, Okehampton
 - b. Newholme, Honiton
 - c. Rosalind House, Tiverton
 - d. Silverhill, Barnstaple
 - e. Tumbly Hill, Kingsbridge
- (ii) **Older Persons Services**
 - a. Tumbly Hill, Kingsbridge.

Endorsement of the Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Climate Adaptation Strategy

The Cabinet considered endorsement of the Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Climate Adaptation Strategy. Points raised:

- The Council had declared a climate emergency and was a founding partner and principal funder of the Devon Climate Emergency initiative. In signing the Devon Climate Declaration, the Council had committed to working with partners to understand the near-term and future risks arising from climate change to plan for how infrastructure, public services and communities would have to adapt.
- The Devon, Cornwall, and Isles of Scilly (DCIoS) Climate Impacts Group (CIG), chaired by the Environment Agency and coordinated by DCC, was formed in 2019. The CIG has prepared the DCIoS Climate Adaptation Strategy, which was a strategic-level document, comprising of three sections:
 1. A Climate Change Risk and Opportunity Assessment (CCRA) split by sector (natural environment, infrastructure, health and built environment, business and industry, and cross-cutting risks). These sectors broadly corresponded with the sectors used in the national climate change risk assessment, which was used as the basis for the analysis.
 2. A Strategic Adaptation Plan, which set out the conditions for everyone to act on adapting to climate change together (“Adaptation Plan”). It provided a set of strategic objectives and suite of strategic-level adaptation options that could be considered for regional collaboration.
 3. An Action Plan, which set out the priority actions for regional collaboration over the next five years, and specific actions for different groups: policy makers, organisations, community groups and individuals.]The full document can be viewed at <https://www.climateresilient-dcios.org.uk/#adaptationstrategy>

Residential Short Break Provision for Children with Disabilities – Robins Provision

A Report of the Director of Children and Young People’s Futures on proposals for Residential Short Break Provision for Children with Disabilities at Robins Children’s Home in Dartington. Key points:

In July 2023, following a ‘Requires Improvement’ Ofsted rating, the independent provider (Lifeworks) issued 3 months’ notice for the termination of their provision of Short Breaks and 52 weeks placements within Robins Children’s Home. In November, the Council took interim responsibility for operations aiming to provide a mix of full-time and respite placements, and incrementally recruit staff and scale the service up to 8 beds, until 31 March 2024. **The Council RESOLVED**

- (a) that the Council’s continued operation of residential short break and 52- week provision at Robins Children’s Home, onwards, from 31st March 2024, be approved; and
- (b) that the movement of £2 million budget from independent placements for children in care, as a result of this policy change, be endorsed.

Corporate Infrastructure and Regulatory Services Scrutiny Committee (CIRS) meeting 28.03.24 (please see end of my full report of the detailed presentations and discussion on the following agenda items at this meeting)

1. **Policing:** A verbal report on local and County Wide policing was provided by Acting Police Chief Constable Jim Colwell.

2. Director of Highways Reports:

The narrative provided was the central issue of inadequate funding over a prolonged number of years has led to chronic and acute maintenance needs not being met, and repairs being left longer, such that voids, not previously seen are now appearing under the surface of the highways. (I asked whether the fairly recent but very deep pothole on the A385 on the Road bridge at Totnes Station was an example

of this – and pressed for this to be repaired as an urgent safety repair – a serious accident waiting to happen)

- Management & coordination of utility activity on the highway
- Highways Performance Dashboard – Winter 2023/24 - Potholes & Drainage
- Carbon reduction project

3. Report of the on-going development and review of the draft Local Transport Plan (LTP4) 2026-2040

Announcements: Devon awarded £5.3 million for zero emission buses

A fleet of 41 electric buses are set to take to Devon's roads in North Devon, Torrington and Exeter by early 2026. DCC's successful joint bid with Stagecoach has secured £5.3 million from the second round of the Department for Transport's [Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas \(ZEBRA\) scheme](#).

[Stagecoach](#) will be investing a further £15 million into the project to roll out new Electric Vehicle buses in Exeter on Service 4, Service A and the Green Park and Ride service, while in North Devon and Torrington they will operate on Services 21/21A, as well as town services in Barnstaple.

Government cash support for Devon's special needs education

DCC has signed an agreement with the Government which will see an extra £95 million of national funds set aside to reduce our deficit on special needs education. Our cumulative spending on education for children with special needs and disabilities (SEND) over the past 10 years is set to create a deficit (the gap between the budget allocated and the budget spent) of £163 million by the end of this financial year. We've set aside £10 million this year to help reduce it, and in common with councils across the country, we've been negotiating with the Government for extra funding for special needs education under the so-called Safety Valve programme. The new agreement will see the Government contribute an extra £38 million by the end of March with the remaining cash being spread out over the following eight years. Read more in the full story [on the news page of our website](#).

Meeting with South Devon Rural Housing CEO – 21.03.24

Cllr Trudy Turrell (chair Dartington PC) and I met with Christine Candlish to discuss the recent merger with Places for People a National Housing Association. The merger had finalised on 20.03.24. The following issues were discussed:

SDRHA Red Lines for the merger:

- To ensure the tenants and property were okay
- Staff to be move across with new employer
- Local office / hub to be retained

The survey of residents carried out by SDRHA prior to the merger was discussed as a number of them had contacted me with their concerns about the changes including whether the surveys carried out for repairs etc to their homes would be carried out. Full assurance was provided by CC that these upgrades, maintenance and repairs would be carried out.

Disposals of SDRHA assets:

- Forder Lane House (previously 25 person adult social care home)– no plans as yet, this could become another Special needs residential unit or 14 x 1 bed flats for Care Leavers or Homeless people
- Western House - Building owned by SDRHA. Has four residential flats (above Totnes Tyres). Asbestos issue makes sales difficult. The bollard that has recently been removed needs to be replace to retain the public walkway free of traffic
- House at Dittisham – needs renovation: recommended CC talks to Dittisham PC who might be interested in Passive House project.

Places for People are seeking new residential units: It was suggested CC talks to Dartington Hall Trust about some of their long empty residential properties. Also that CC should make contact with the new Housing portfolio holder at SHDC, as their remit for new Affordable Housing has expanded.

Recent complaints made about the waste, recycling and clinical waste bins at Elmhirst Court were raised and we were assured that this had been dealt with and the clinical waste bins removed off site.

Community Safety Partnership meeting – Tavistock. 27.03.24

The meeting covered updates on a number of the projects and partnership work the network covers:

Links with wider partnerships

- School Community Safety partnership
- Primary school network
- Serious Violence Prevention – with Devon County Council

Gary Wilson, Teignbridge Community and safety Partnership officer outlined antisocial behaviour work

Priorities for 2023/24 include changing Youth Culture- Lets Talk Programme has been very successful

- Continued focus on Community Protection warnings

Chief Police Superintendent Roy Wilson police overview:

Local delivery to operational threats:

- Tactical delivery
- Partnership involvement
- Situational awareness
- Holistic approach to issues and priorities

Antisocial behaviour:

- Embedded NOXA process
- Multiagency process to identify risks and expediate response
- On-going visits to monitor

Drugs:

- operation Scorpion
- Awareness campaigns
- Numerous County intelligence
- Local warrants executed
- Other on-going work: Improvements in 101 contacts and reopening police stations

Chief Inspector Miranda Pusey – local policing support team overview of programmes: Safety advisory events

- Neighbourhood policing teams
- violence against women and girls & misogyny
- Notices with information about safety inside toilet doors
- 1:1 targeted youth work
- Zero tolerance to hate crime

Rural Crime:

- NPCC wildlife and rural crime 2022-25 programme
- Rural Affairs team delivered engagement events:
- Safer Spaces, Safer Places- whole community approach
- Working with Young Devon – 3 peer researchers with young people at the heart. Mapped the safe places in Newton Abbott. Asked young people how and where they feel safe.

Sarah Ornell Programme Director for DCC Programme: and Jenny Jurga.

Home Office funded project- Serious Crime prevention – Breaking the cycle

- Mapping of serious violence
- Lets Talk programme
- Theory of Change

DCC Highways Works notified:

W241722273 - Pothole on Station Road , Totnes – Further to my raising this at DCC, this dangerous pothole has now had some preliminary works and the complete works will take place within 2 weeks

W241733184 - Pothole on Coronation Road, Totnes (outside Morrisons) – now prioritised and should be mended shortly

TOTNES DOWN HILL, Totnes (TTRO2456534) Amended TTRO created to replace TTRO 2456257 as this closure is now 24 hours

MONDAY 15 APRIL 2024 for a maximum of 5 days Until FRIDAY 19 APRIL 2024 (both dates inclusive)

No person shall cause or permit any vehicle to proceed on the sections of Affected Roads.

Roads affected - TOTNES DOWN HILL, TOTNES

The alternative, signed, route for vehicles will be via -

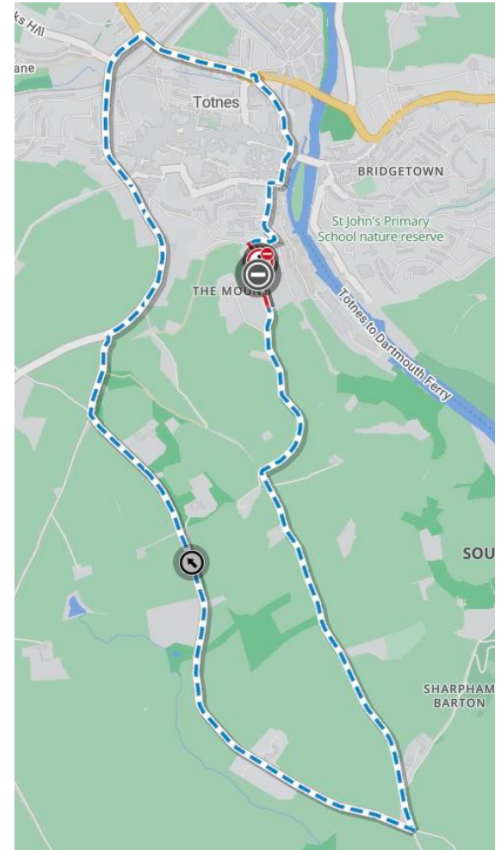
TOTNES DOWN HILL - HIGHER BOWDON TO ASHPRINGTON CROSS - ASHPRINGTON CROSS TO BOWDEN PILLARS, - BOWDEN PILLARS TO A381 PAST

BOWDEN LODGE - WESTERN BY PASS - STATION ROAD - CORONATION ROAD -

THE PLAINS - WARLAND

ROAD CLOSURE IS REQUIRED FOR LAYING DUCT

For additional information contact: SUNBELT RENTALS UK Telephone: 03700 500792



Temporary Traffic Order - MEMORY CROSS TO PORTBRIDGE COTTAGE, MEMORY CROSS TO NUMBER 10 MEMORY CROSS, ROAD FROM BEASTON CROSS TO PORTBRIDGE CROSS, Staverton (TTRO2456609)

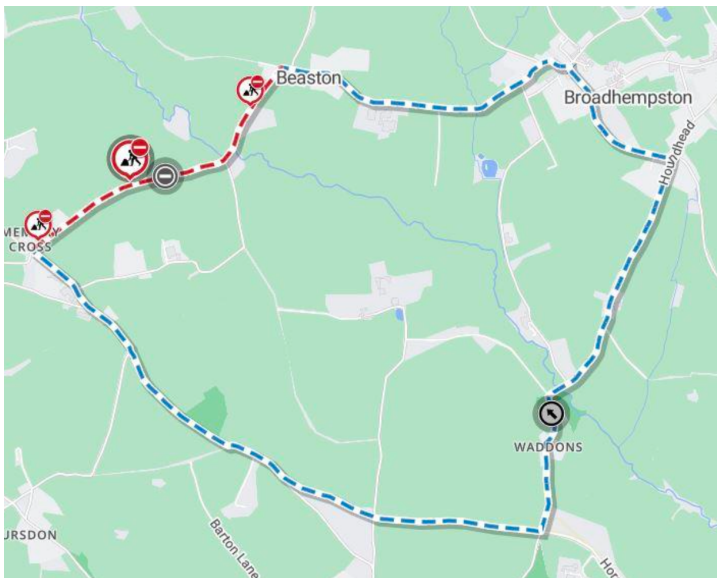
MONDAY 17 JUNE 2024 for a maximum of 18 months. Anticipated Finish FRIDAY 21 JUNE 2024. No person shall cause or permit any vehicle to proceed on the sections of Affected Roads. Roads affected -

MEMORY CROSS TO PORTBRIDGE COTTAGE, MEMORY CROSS TO NUMBER 10 MEMORY CROSS, ROAD FROM BEASTON CROSS TO PORTBRIDGE CROSS,

ASHBURTON, BROADHEMPSTON, CARRIAGEWAY, MEMORY CROSS TO NUMBER

10 MEMORY CROSS, MEMORY CROSS TO PORTBRIDGE COTTAGE & ROAD FROM BEASTON CROSS TO PORTBRIDGE CROSS

The alternative, signed, route for vehicles will be via - MEMORY CROSS TO NUMBER 10 MEMORY CROSS, MEMORY CROSS TO FURSDON CROSS, MOOTHILL CROSS TO CROSS SOUTH OF ALLWYNS, MOOTHILL CROSS TO WADDONS CROSS, ROAD FROM WADDONS CROSS TO BOW BRIDGE, ROAD FROM VICARAGE CROSS TO BOW CROSS, ROAD FROM ROUGHLANDS TO THE GABLES, ROAD FROM POST OFFICE TO STOOP CROSS, ROAD FROM METHODIST CHURCH CROSS TO POST OFFICE, ROAD FROM BEASTON CROSS TO CHAPEL COTTAGE, ROAD FROM



BEASTON CROSS TO PORTBRIDGE CROSS AND VICE VERSA

This temporary restriction is considered necessary to enable - PATCHING

For additional information contact: MILESTONE INFRASTRUCTURE. Telephone: 0203 307 7858

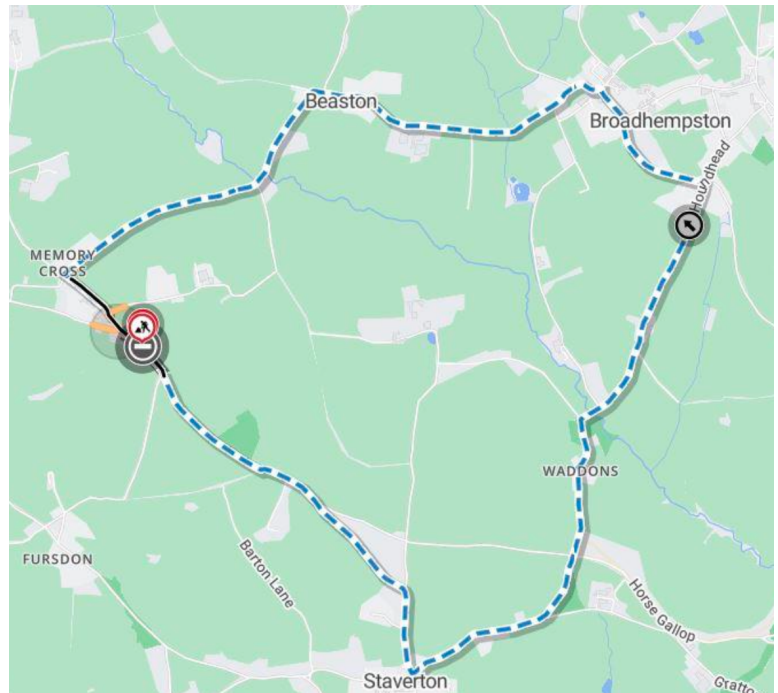
Temporary Traffic Order - Pump Cottage, MEMORY CROSS TO FURSDON , TQ9 6AL, Staverton (TTRO2456358)

MONDAY 1 JULY 2024 for a maximum of 18 months Anticipated Finish FRIDAY 30 AUGUST 2024

No person shall cause or permit any vehicle to proceed on the sections of Affected Roads. Roads affected – PUMP COTTAGE, MEMORY CROSS TO FURSDON, TQ9 6AL, STAVERTON

The alternative, signed, route for vehicles will be via - MEMORY CROSS TO FURSDON CROSS, MOOTHILL CROSS TO CROSS SOUTH OF ALLWYNS, SANDY LANE, MOOTHILL CROSS TO TOWN HILL, TOWN HILL, ROAD FROM BLACKLERS LAND CROSS TO TOWN HILL, ROAD FROM WADDONS CROSS TO BLACKLERS LAND CROSS, ROAD FROM WADDONS CROSS TO BOW BRIDGE, ROAD FROM BOW BRIDGE TO BOW CROSS, ROAD FROM VICARAGE CROSS TO BOW CROSS, ROAD FROM ROUGHLANDS TO THE GABLES, ROAD FROM POST OFFICE TO STOOP CROSS, ROAD FROM METHODIST CHURCH CROSS TO POST OFFICE, ROAD FROM BEASTON CROSS TO CHAPEL COTTAGE, ROAD FROM BEASTON CROSS TO PORTBRIDGE CROSS, MEMORY CROSS TO PORTBRIDGE COTTAGE, MEMORY CROSS TO NUMBER 10 MEMORY CROSS AND VICE VERSA

This temporary restriction is considered necessary to enable - ERECTION OF SCAFFOLDING FOR THE REMOVAL OF EXISTING (DEFECTIVE) RENDER ON A DOMESTIC DWELLING (PUMP COTTAGE), RESTORATION OF EXISTING COB, STONEMWORK AND COMPLETE RE-RENDER IN LIME MORTAR. RESTORATION OF DRAINAGE CHANNELS AT THE BASE OF PROPERTY WALLS (NOT ON THE HIGHWAY).
 For additional information contact: SAFEMARK ROAD MARKING LTD Telephone: 08003689113



A384 Huxhams Cross to Shinners Bridge, Dartington (TTRO2456539)

MONDAY 5 AUGUST 2024 for a maximum of 5 days Until THURSDAY 8 AUGUST 2024 (both dates inclusive)
 Between the hours of 19:00 and 06:00
 No person shall cause or permit any vehicle to proceed on the sections of Affected Roads.

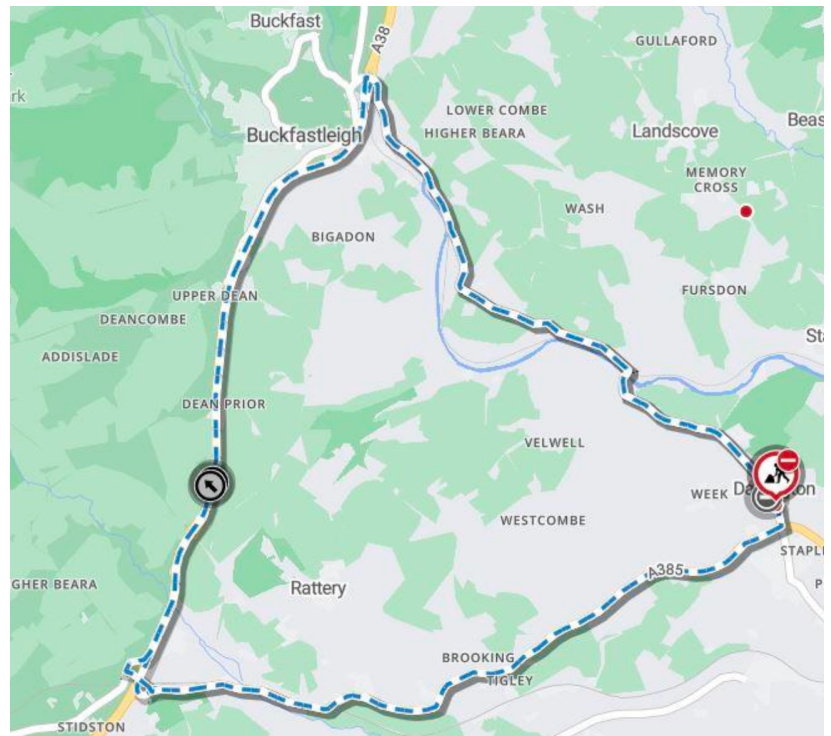
Roads affected -

A384 HUXHAMS CROSS TO SHINNERS BRIDGE, DARTINGTON , HUXHAMS CROSS TO SHINNERS BRIDGE DARTINGTON

The alternative, signed, route for vehicles will be via - DIVERSION - A384 -A38-A385- A384-- VISA VERSA

This temporary restriction is considered necessary to enable - RESURFACING AND ASSOCIATED WORKS

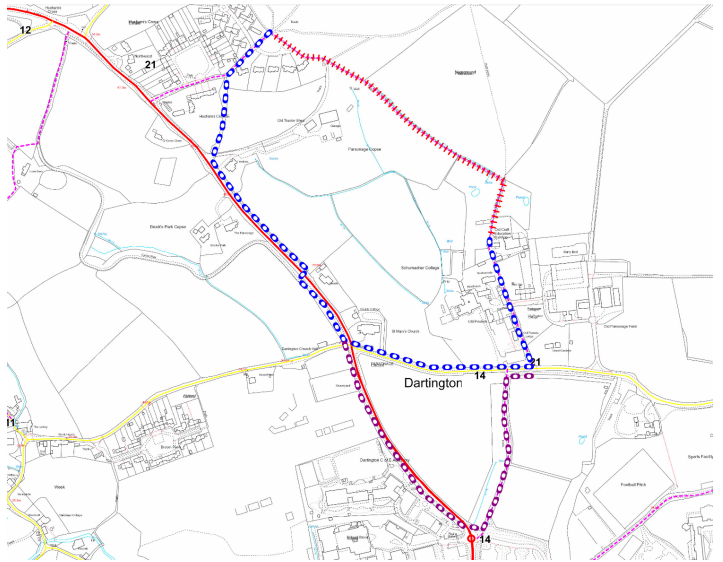
For additional information contact: E & J W GLENDINNING LIMITED Tel: 01392 465348



PUBLIC FOOTPATH NO. 21, DARTINGTON, from North Woods, Huxham’s Cross, to The Old Craft Education Building near Schumacher College – Temporary Closures - see red dashes on the adjacent plan.

From: FRIDAY, 5th APRIL 2024 To:TUESDAY, 9th APRIL 2024 both dates inclusive. Also From:WEDNESDAY, 10th APRIL 2024 To:SUNDAY, 14th APRIL 2024 both dates inclusive. No persons shall proceed on the following public right of way except for access to land or premises on or adjacent to that length of way. Public right of way affected: The closure is necessary to enable the safe removal of a number of Ash trees with Ash Dieback.

The restriction shall remain in force for the above period or until the works have been completed, whichever is the sooner. The alternative route is via Public Footpath No. 21, Dartington; path past Huxham's Cross Community Orchard; path parallel to, but separated from, the A384; National Cycle Network Route 2; Road C201 (Dartington Hall Upper Drive); and Public Footpath No. 21, Dartington; and vice versa – see blue circles on the adjacent plan. To avoid the road section above, a further alternative route continues south from Parsonage Cross: National Cycle Network Route 2; and Public Footpath No. 14, Dartington/Permissive Cycle Path from Cider Press to Schumacher College; then rejoining above alternative route; and vice versa – see purple circles on the adjacent plan.



Further information may be obtained by contacting Public Rights of Way on 0345 155 1004

Patching Works postponed in Staverton:

Due to recent adverse weather affecting the works programme, the following planned patching works have been postponed. New dates will be notified by DCC when available.

Planned patching works on Sandy Lane, Staverton: to be rescheduled

Temporary Traffic Order - PARKFIELD TO GULLAFORD, Staverton (TTRO2456612)

MONDAY 24 JUNE 2024 for a maximum of 18 months Anticipated Finish WEDNESDAY 3 JULY 2024

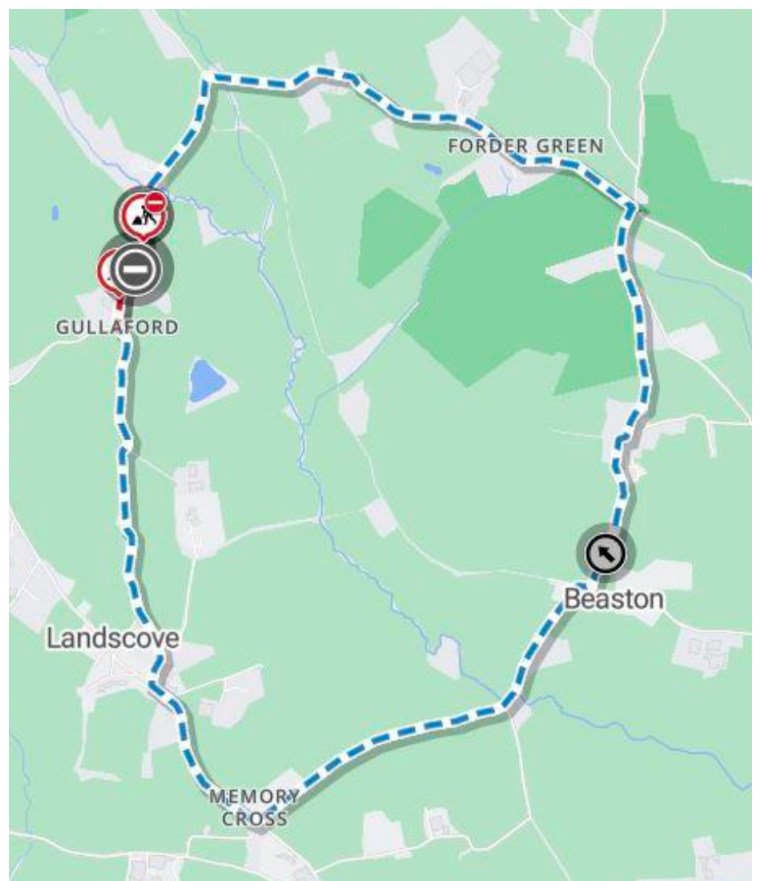
No person shall cause or permit any vehicle to proceed on the sections of Affected Roads.

Roads affected - PARKFIELD TO GULLAFORD, ASHBURTON

The alternative, signed, route for vehicles will be via - ROAD PAST LITTLE WOODLAND, ROAD PAST YOUNGHOUSE FARM, ROAD FROM FORDER GREEN TO WAYTOWN CROSS, ROAD PAST RAYTOWN FARM, ROAD FROM BICKATON CROSS TO BEASTON CROSS, ROAD FROM BEASTON CROSS TO PORTBRIDGE CROSS, MEMORY CROSS TO PORTBRIDGE COTTAGE, CHURCH CROSS TO MEMORY CROSS, GULLAFORD CROSS TO WOOLSTON GREEN AND VICE VERSA

This temporary restriction is considered necessary to enable - PATCHING

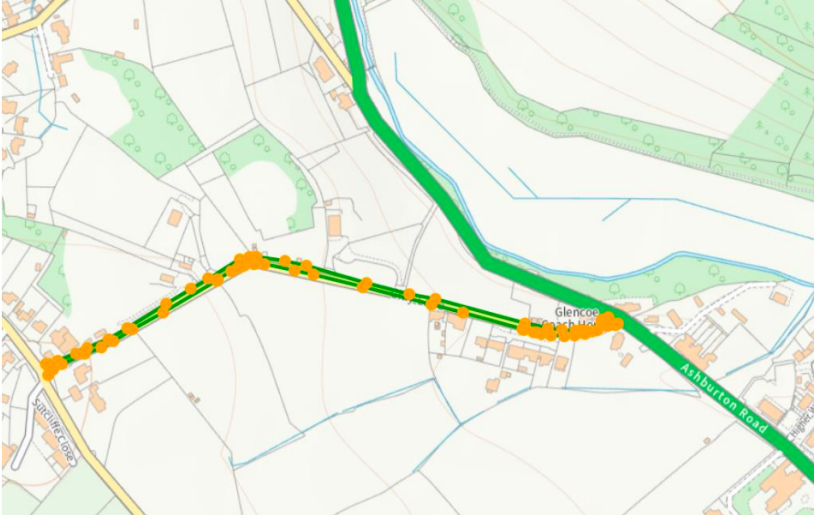
For additional information contact: MILESTONE INFRASTRUCTURE Tel:0203 307 7858



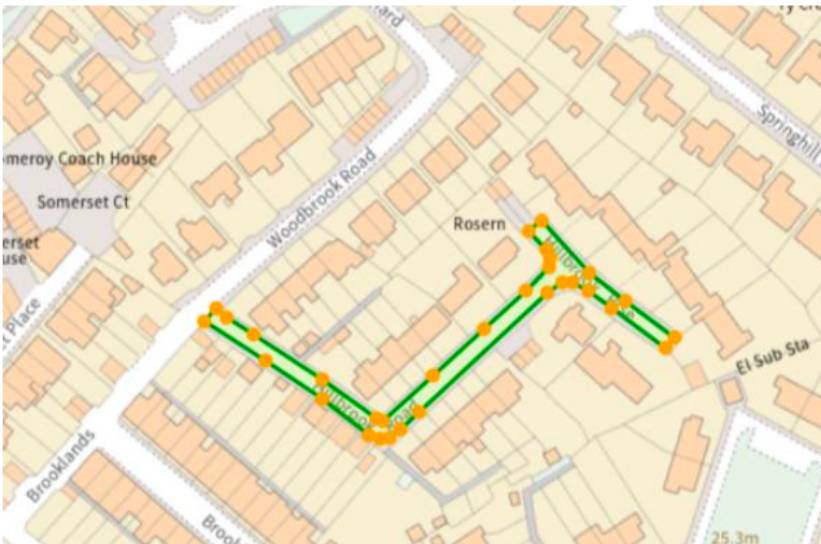
Surface Dressing Programme 2024: I have been notified of the following works in Totnes Division. These works will be conducted on behalf of Devon County Council by Kiely Group. The dates programmed for the works are provisional within a window of five days as highlighted on the One.Network. As you can appreciate the works are heavily dependant on the weather as the bitumen is mixed with water and must be done in dry

weather conditions where possible. The works will take up to 1 day to complete and site dependant be quicker than that. Any queries to highway.highwayscommunityliaison-mailbox@devon.gov.uk

ORD2106419 Clay Lane, Dartington planned for Monday 22nd April



ORD230076 Hillbrook Road Totnes. Planned for Monday 22nd April



ORD2303135 Weston Road Totnes. Planned for Monday 22nd April



Other matters:

Totnes Climate & Ecological Emergency Working Group. The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 16th April at 6.30pm. Meetings will take place on the third Tuesday of the month at 6.30pm at Totnes Climate Hub. All welcome.

Totnes & District Traffic and Transport Forum (T&DTTF): Next Steering Group meeting in June date tbc.

TRAYE (Totnes Rural Area Youth Engagement) project held its AGM on March 15th. The published annual report detailing the annual accounts and youth activities in the towns and parishes where it provides activities and events, based on the verbal reports presented to the AGM, will be circulated as soon as possible.

**Corporate Infrastructure and Regulatory Services Scrutiny Committee (CIRS) meeting 28.03.24
Detailed reports presented at this meeting as outlined above):**

1. **Policing:** A verbal report on local and County Wide policing was provided by Acting Police Chief Constable Jim Colwell. He outlined their strong resource base of 7,000 strong and 250 Special Constables having recruited 1,300 new officers in the last 3 years.

The emerging challenges were outlined including:

1. **the need to regroup** as one local force rather than smaller groups as this allows greater flexibility and resilience in particular when there is a national shortage of detectives.

A spike in local crime – due to the cost of living crisis- in particular burglaries and vehicle crime
Monitoring capacity to evaluate and assess their own performance- investing in this.

2. **Their current performance** was assessed as ‘Special Measures’ due to:

How crime is recorded

Getting to 70% of calls into 999 and 101 within 84 seconds (90% is the required target)

~ 70% of local calls were being abandoned

Now their performance has improved since August 2023:

Now hitting 90% of crimes reported to officers

Getting to 95% of 999 calls within 10 seconds

Getting to 80% of 101 calls

~ 20% of 101 calls abandoned

This performance still needs to be improved.

3. How sexual offences are recorded: first assessments and home visits are not enough. This has been addressed
4. Firearms: since the Plymouth shootings in 2021 the Licence unit has been improved and they are now one of the best in the Country. They previously had a backlog of licence renewals which has been addressed.
5. The delays in the Criminal Justice System_ there was a queue of over 1,000 cases, now down to 200.
6. Standards – there is a large proportion of new recruits with less than 3 years experience. This is the same across the country, making front line duties more pressurized

New resources / investment:

Reopening of frontline offices in Ivybridge, Tavistock and Exeter this year. (Not Totnes police Station unfortunately – I did ask)

New priorities:

- 999 calls: Ensuring there is an immediate response to every 999 call – getting there within 20minutes (not easy in a rural area). Getting to a burglary within an hour.
- Domestic abuse: More services
- Effective and competent investigation of crime- need to be there and timely and give public confidence.

- Prevention and working closely with other partners: for enhanced capacity.

My questions: How are they addressing the drug problems in Totnes, Devon and County Lines, also the online and phone scams that are defrauding people being addressed?

Reply: Continued investment in Neighbourhood police and offender approach focussed.

2. Highway Team – reports of the Director

A. Management & coordination of utility activity on the highway

DCC Network Operations Support Team (NOST) manages road space coordination for street works and has seen activity growth with permit volumes increasing. Similarly, enforcement activity has elevated with the continuing growth of fibre communication delivery. There were just over 47,000 permit applications made in 2021 and almost 51,000 in 2022. In 2023 it rose to almost 54,000 representing a 14% increase in just 2 years. Promoters submit permits for different works durations:

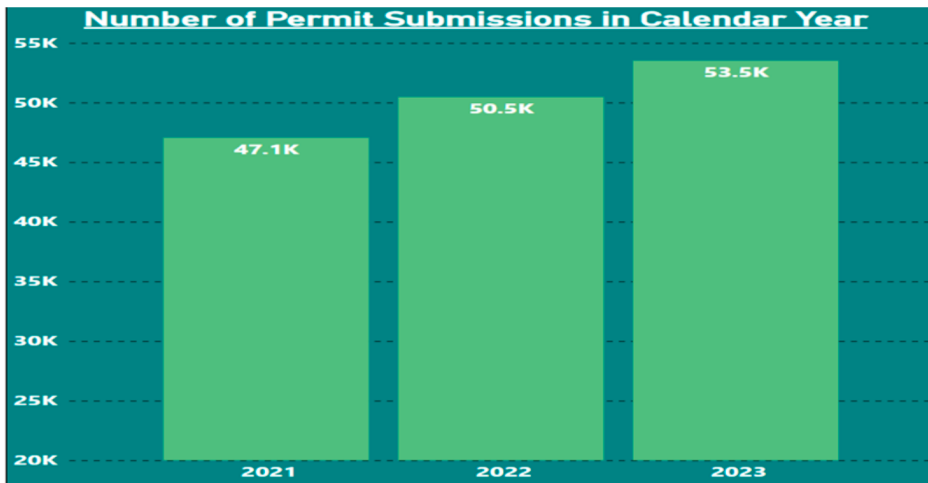
- **Minor works** permits are for 3 days or less, a standard permit is for 4 to 10 days.
- **Major permits** are for works exceeding 10 days and for works of any duration if they involve a road closure.
- Another permit category is **‘Immediate.’** These are challenging to manage and are for either an ‘Emergency’ (to ‘prevent danger to persons or property) or ‘Urgent’ (to prevent or put an end to an unplanned interruption in a supply or service) reason. Immediate permits are reactive and require no advanced notice. Legally, the promoter is only required to inform the Council in the first 2 hours of commencing activity. The decision to use an immediate permit is for the promoter to make but this can be challenged. Once the County Council is aware of immediate works, invariably they are already underway with an excavation commenced. Revoking or refusing the permit in such circumstances can be open to legal challenge where customers have a loss or degradation in a supply or service.

To mitigate issues, conditions can be imposed such as the manual control of any temporary traffic lights in use or, improvements to traffic management and signing if a road is closed. Instructing a utility to leave the highway is a significant step requiring cooperation and is only considered in the most extreme cases if immediate works are taking place. Permits have strict time constraints for their assessment. This also applies to change and extension requests submitted with response time scales being as little as 48hrs. If a response timescale is not met, the permit or request will self-deem as approved at no cost to the promoter.

More recently there has been an increase in permit applications requiring road closures, defined as ‘major’ activity. In 2021 and 2022 there were just over 6,000 such applications annually however, in 2023 this rose to near 9,500 representing an increase of almost 60%. Applications continue to be scrutinised to verify the requirements and work continues with utilities to better understand their rationale to reduce closure requirements. There isn’t a single rationale or clear pattern to this increase and seems to stem from a host of factors, e.g. apparatus upgrades, fibre expansion, increased development etc. It is also worth noting that in verbal discussions with other authorities it appears Devon are not alone in experiencing this trend. The ‘firm but fair’ approach in managing road space continues so, where feasible, activity is enabled rather than adopting a preventative approach. Access to road space is a requisite feature in street works and, while scrutiny is applied, working cooperatively is the aim.

While using this approach, Devon continues to hold the principal utilities to account at the bi-annual performance meetings. Data is analysed in terms of permits submitted and works undertaken with activity on the ground assessed through inspections and coring. A significant update has been drafted for Devon’s website on the pages dedicated to road works. The aim is to provide a greater wealth of information about works and FAQs for the public to enhance understanding. This is anticipated this will go live during the first quarter of 2024.

During 2022/23, the Network Operations Support Team absorbed a large volume of new tasks involving all restrictions on the highway network, including those for new developments. Private street works licences have been added to street manager and One Network to aid in coordination.



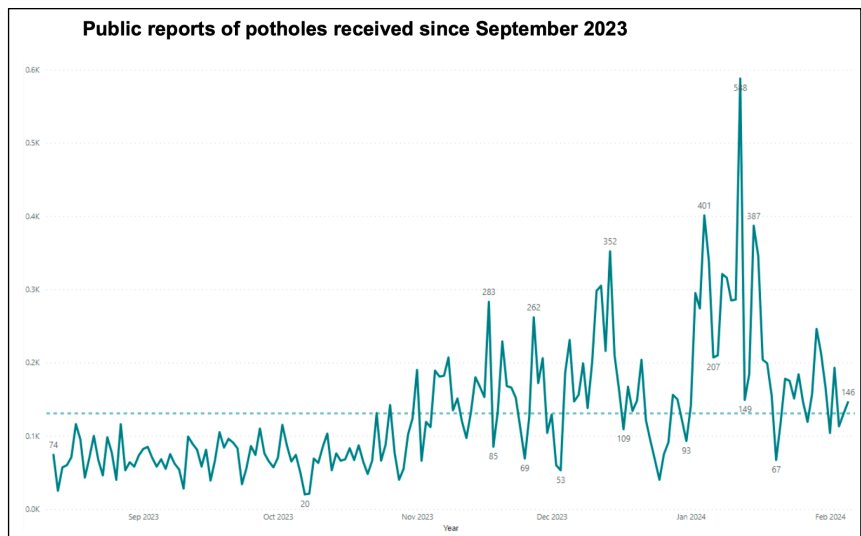
B. Highways Performance Dashboard – Winter 2023/24

Potholes & Drainage Task Group updated Performance Report. To provide an overview of the performance of the Highways and Traffic Management Team over the winter period.

Reactive Works

PIP (Public Interface Portal) Enquiries

As is typical for the winter period, the Service has recorded a gradual increase in the number of publicly reported pothole defects (PIPs) since November. The team of Highway Safety Inspectors are working hard to undertake assessments, using extended weekday and weekend working where resource allows. Milestone are currently in the process of recruiting three additional permanent inspectors to assist in driving further efficiencies and timely inspections of these reports. At the start of 2024, the Service implemented changes to the pothole reporting pages on the PIP website to improve clarity for citizens on intervention criteria, the triage inspection process, outcomes and customer feedback. The incoming data is being carefully monitored and will support decisions on future enhancements.



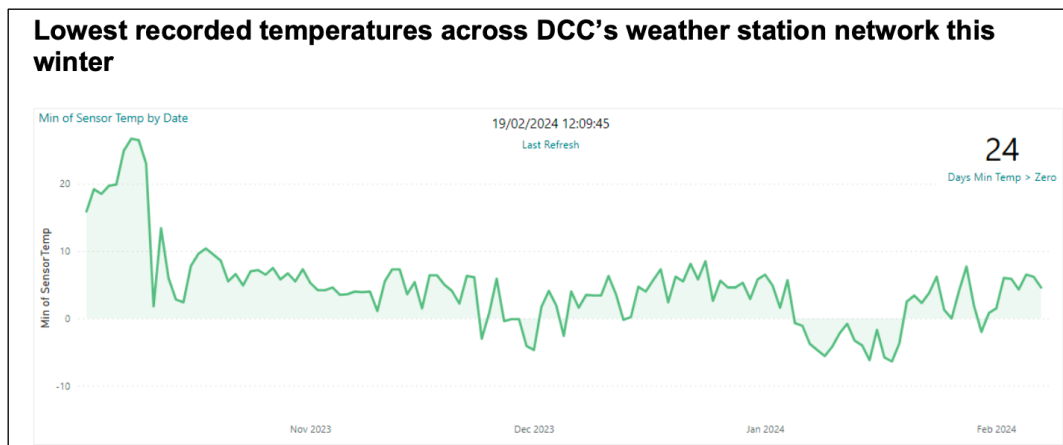
Number of potholes recorded across the Devon network per month/year to 19 Feb 2024

	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	Avg
April	3,489	9,782	3,741	6,505	3,904	2,984	4,631	5,005
May	4,329	6,339	3,344	4,764	4,248	3,499	4,183	4,387
June	3,293	5,120	3,713	5,179	5,743	2,949	3,739	4,248
July	3,148	5,225	2,719	4,040	4,301	2,766	3,470	3,667
August	3,352	4,423	2,041	3,071	3,845	2,344	3,781	3,265
September	2,831	3,378	2,745	3,297	2,874	2,133	3,650	2,987
October	3,750	3,137	3,013	2,465	2,545	1,478	2,807	2,742
November	4,316	3,434	3,931	3,349	2,697	2,654	4,874	3,608
December	3,766	3,533	3,393	2,465	2,723	2,434	3,551	3,124
January	7,408	5,770	6,694	5,181	3,494	7,376	5,563	5,927
February	7,687	5,121	5,269	5,619	2,972	4,308	4,010	4,998
March	8,523	6,706	7,884	6,190	4,919	4,888		6,518
Total	55,892	61,968	48,487	52,125	44,265	39,813	44,260	49,351

Safety Defects

The Service has already recorded more pothole defects this financial year than 2022/23. Whilst a further 12 months of network deterioration has occurred, the impacts on network condition of the relatively early and harsh freeze/thaw cycles experienced during last winter (2022/23) were felt deep into the summer months of 2023. In addition to the winter weather, there has been an unprecedented number of storm events experienced so far this autumn and winter.

Currently, through a combination of carefully optimised and balanced contractor resource and an accelerated programme of reactive patching, the Service is managing to contain the overall number of pothole defects across the network awaiting repair. Crucially, this has enabled the team to continue the identification and repair of non-safety or 'serviceability' potholes and patches through what is historically a very demanding period, in recognition of the efficiencies in repairing these emerging defects, prior to further deterioration. This has been possible through the allocation of £1.5m of the additional in-year government funding. In the summer/autumn of 2023 the Service conducted a comprehensive trial of a road surface repair system called 'Elastomac', which was demonstrated to Councillors in May 2023. The system uses a flowable mastic asphalt which incorporates up to 70%-80% recycled materials and can be installed much more quickly than traditional patching techniques and with less disruption to the travelling public. This new solution will be added to the wider 'toolkit' again from the spring through to autumn this year. The Dragon Patchers have undertaken more than five hundred shifts so far in 2023/24 at numerous sites across Devon. While the winter weather conditions are less favourable, the machines have been tackling safety defects.



Winter Service

As of the beginning of February 1,092 gritting runs have been conducted, using around 4,750 tonnes of salt. This is around half the amount when compared to the same period last season. A review of management of the winter service fleet (gritters etc.), has enabled the team to achieve further reductions in the maintenance costs of these vehicles, despite the high inflation rates associated with vehicle parts and labour. This has been a collaborative endeavour with Milestone's in-house workshop team. Following a successful, collaborative procurement exercise with some neighbouring authorities, the Service switched to a new weather forecast provider, MetDesk, at the start of the season. This has facilitated full adoption of Route-Based Forecasting (RBF) to support decisions to send which gritters during freezing conditions. RBF provides a far greater level of detail in the route treatment selection (of which there are 37 primary routes) within the five weather domains in Devon, with associated cost, efficiency and carbon reduction benefits.

The service continues to draw national interest from leading research bodies, industry groups and other highway authorities in the treatment of cycleways and footways in Exeter. DCC is proactively sharing our findings to assist in promoting more sustainable travel and helping to meet carbon reduction objectives. More sustainable gritting vehicles are gradually emerging on to the market, and the Service is exploring how and where they may fit amongst the existing fleet and infrastructure in the future. However, the cost of this technology is currently prohibitive.

Cyclical Operations

Gully Cleaning

While there have been challenges around plant breakdowns and availability, it is anticipated the programme to clean 150,630 gully assets will be completed on time for the current financial year. The additional high pressure jetting resource is currently resolving approximately 800 recorded issues per month, effectively maintaining pace with the number of issues reported during the flooding events experienced over the 2023/24 winter period. Service continues to trial a different approach to cleaning both urban gullies and gullies that require multiple cleans per year. This information is providing valuable information to review cleaning frequencies and timings as with the aim of improving the efficiency of the service in the future.

Grips, Easements and Buddleholes

The 2023/24 programme to clear 111,594 grip, easement and buddlehole assets is currently running 2% ahead of planned programme. If current progress is maintained at this rate, it may be possible during the final month to undertake some proactive cleaning of these assets, focusing on recorded work requests.

Tree Safety Management (including vegetation); Expert Scheduled Inspections

The 2023 programme of scheduled expert tree inspections generated 503 records of defective trees compared with 274 records in 2022. This represents an increase of approximately 84%.

Ash Dieback (ADB)

The total number of trees reported with ash dieback from scheduled expert inspections in 2023 was 1,084, which is the second highest number after 2020, and an overall increase of nearly 400% compared with last year. Trees with ash dieback represented over half of all expert inspection records in 2023. Scheduled expert inspections in 2021 and 2022 had suggested a downward trend in the overall number of trees reported with ash dieback, reducing from 470 to 274. However in 2023, only scheduled expert inspections in South Hams reported a decrease in trees with ash dieback. Significant increases were seen in Teignbridge (53 to 132), Torridge (15 to 134) and North Devon (39 to 647).

Highway Safety Inspections

To the end of November 2023 Highway Safety Inspectors had referred 96 tree related defects to the Tree Safety Management Team for action. In the same period last year 319 tree related defects were referred, many of which were found to present tolerable or negligible risk when attended by expert tree inspectors. The reduced referral number in 2023 is an indication that the quality of reporting has improved following refresher training given to Highway Safety Inspectors in 2022.

Tree Inventory

The tree inventory is being developed with a series of workshops planned in March when its use as the basis of a new management system for trees and vegetation will be explored.

Highways Digital Transformation Project

A significant number of features have been delivered following the last update, with the development focus being very much on providing additional value for staff in ALFIE (Applications, Licences, Faults, Information and Enquiries). Alongside the release of ALFIE the Service launched a new online form that allows contractors to apply online for a licence to place apparatus or excavate the highway. The new features provide improved efficiency for staff while offering better tools to record all the associated communications. In addition, the new system has removed an organisational risk associated with reliance on an outdated and unsupported database.

Delivery of the Capital Programme

Carriageway Assets

Design, programming, and delivery of planned maintenance work continues to go very well. In-house teams have worked hard to ensure that the additional £9.4m funding awarded in mid-March 2023, and the additional £6.6m awarded in mid-November 2023 is being invested appropriately to maximise the impact on Devon's network. The additional £9.4m incorporated into the Council's wider 2023/24 highway structural maintenance budget is covered in the following sections. Progress on schemes being delivered through the additional £6.6m is ongoing. Over £8 million will be invested into the strategic A-road network by the end of

the financial year, typically through resurfacing and associated drainage refurbishment. Within this funding there is an additional programme of works that addresses locations of known risk of wet-road skidding following SCRIM (Sideway-force Coefficient Routine Investigation Machine) surveys.

A number of high-profile schemes have been delivered, including the A381 Main Road, Harbertonford, the A361 St Brannocks Road, Ilfracombe and the A38 to M5 J27. By the end of the financial year over £17m of planned works will be delivered via the Local Asset Capital Programme. This programme aims to prioritise schemes for lower category local roads outside the A-road network. It is a process that brings different asset data sources and local knowledge together focusing on the holistic needs of the network, and therefore includes a range of different work types including resurfacing, patching, footways, drainage, cattle grids, etc. A further £6m of reactive, short notice, planned works including minor hand patching and dragon patching will be delivered on the minor network. These works are identified through the centrally managed highway safety inspections and delivered countywide via a rolling program through to the end of the financial year.

Bridges and Structures

In addition to carriageway assets the programme of maintenance for bridges and structures has included the refurbishment of both the Drakes Trail Gem Aerial Walkway and Courtlands Boardwalk on the Exe Estuary Trail. This year has seen the completion of a 3-year programme of Post Tension Bridge Inspections which are undertaken every 18 years. An ongoing programme of rockface management continues with inspection and works ongoing on the A39 at Watersmeet Road, Lynmouth. Refurbishment works and masonry repairs to the walls at Iron Bridge Exeter were completed earlier in the year and further works are ongoing to stabilise an adjacent retaining wall.

The unprecedented number of flooding and storm events this autumn and winter has resulted in the damage and closure of a number of footbridges, including Coleridge footbridge in Ottery and Dotton footbridge near Newton Poppleford. These events by their nature are unplanned and as a result some capital schemes could not be delivered as programmed. The affected schemes will be carried forward into 2024/25. The various storm events have led to £2.1m of the resilience contingency budget being used. The May 2023 storm event resulted in heavy flooding, particularly in the east of Devon leading to road surface and structural damage, alongside heavy debris resulting in multiple legacy works.

Cross Asset Innovation

£3.6 million was allocated to a Cross Asset Innovation Fund, recognising the authority must continue to engage with the market sector to encourage innovation. Delivery of the budget is on course with two hybrid rural road maintenance projects that address drainage cleaning at the same time as carriage way repairs were delivered in West Devon during the summer of 2023. The schemes while facing some challenges have been seen as successful with delivery under budget, no post winter patching required on the most recent assessment and being well received by the local communities.

A 'retread' recycling programme is programmed to start in March 2024 across five sites in North and West Devon. Retreading involves breaking up the existing road surface which is then mixed with bitumen and rolled to create a solid structural layer, then sealed. In most cases, a surface layer of asphalt or micro asphalt is also applied, which can happen several weeks after the road has been retread.

A programme of micro asphalt was completed by mid-October 2023. Micro asphalt is a relatively low-cost preventative surface treatment similar to surface dressing but is more suitable for urban and residential environments. The successful delivery of this program resulted in thirty-five sites across the County being delivered, and over 9km of carriageway being sealed.

At the end of November 2023 DCC received an additional £6,663,000 of funding to be allocated within the 2023/24 financial year from the Department for Transport's Road Resurfacing Fund for local highways maintenance. In addition to the £1.5m allocated to serviceability patching mentioned in 2.2 above, the remainder was allocated to surfacing and larger patching schemes which will provide targeted resilience across the network.

Progress on the Delivery of Maintenance Schemes funded through the additional £6.6M. Those in Totnes County division are:

Scheme name		Parish	Length (m)	Programme Date
P117	Baddaford Cross	Ashburton	1,074	Delivered
P128	Parkfield Cross	Ashburton	1,371	Delivered
P1128	Weirfield Road	Totnes	354	March

Street Lighting and Traffic Signals

The roll out of LED luminaires continues across the county, with the aim to reach 70,000 by the end of this financial year. By way of comparison the table below highlights the energy savings offered by this initiative.

Financial Year	Energy Used (kWh)	Saving (kWh)
2021/22	14,439,652	
2022/23	13,187,867	1,251,785

This trend will continue through 2023/24 with the expectation that a further saving in the region of 1 million kWh will be achieved. With energy prices still increasing, this piece of work has been critical in managing revenue expenditure. Coupled with LED, the Central Management System roll out has now been installed in 25,600 lanterns. Three areas (Holcombe Rogus, Sidmouth, The Kerswells) are set up for a trial to offer further dimming options and extend the part night light switch off times. It is hoped this will give a greater ability to react to increasing energy prices and meet the needs of the people of Devon. In addition to energy savings, the LED roll out has an associated reduction in carbon.

Financial Year	Carbon Produced (tonnes)	Saving (tonnes)
2021/22	3,303	
2022/23	2,752	551

From a traffic signal perspective, the age of the assets across the network is generally less than 15 years old. The Bus Service Improvement Programme is an opportunity to introduce innovative technology at junctions and pedestrian crossings to help buses reduce travel time on the main corridors into Exeter and there will be future proposals around Newton Abbot and Barnstaple.

Carbon Reduction Project

The use of hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) as a low carbon alternative to diesel has been extended to the south and east areas of the county. The winter gritters and Milestone's larger construction vehicles, such as 3.5 tonnes pickups are also utilising HVO. The HVO source is derived entirely from food waste and has an associated reduction in carbon emissions in the order of 90% when compared with diesel.

The new method of collating data on carbon emissions is progressing and the council has received 561 returns in an 18-month period from contractors. These returns allow an estimate of the total carbon emissions associated with the works to be calculated. A quarterly carbon board is now in operation, offering governance and strategic direction.

In November, the Service published a Decarbonisation Strategy which sets out the vision for reducing carbon from construction and maintenance works. In collaboration with Milestone and the Materials Laboratory the specification for concrete has been amended to allow low carbon concrete. From March, this change will see an approximate carbon reduction associated with concrete works of 30%.

Social Value

In January the Devon Highways Social Value Plan was launched in partnership with Milestone. This plan intends to drive the right behaviours to help deliver value beyond financial gain to our communities through the Term Maintenance Contract. In 2023, it is estimated that £1,706,000 of social value was delivered through the Devon Highways partnership. This figure is calculated in line with the National Social Value Standard methodology and includes factors such as value of spending with local suppliers, the number of apprentices employed, and the value generated by Milestone employees using their corporate volunteering days.

3. Report of the on-going development and review of the draft Local Transport Plan (LTP4) 2026-2040

Under the Local Transport Act 2008, the Council has a statutory duty to produce a Local Transport Plan (LTP) which supports the achievement of The Department for Transport's strategic priorities of: levelling up the economy, improving transport for the user, and reducing environmental impacts. The Council's refreshed LTP 4 will work to achieve these priorities alongside addressing local issues.

The current LTP3, runs from 2011 – 2026. LTP4 sets out a vision for Devon's transport over the next 15 years, what that will look like, why, and how it will be delivered. LTP4 builds upon the progress and achievement made under LTP3 and sets out the overarching ambitions for Devon and Torbay's transport network, and provision, having taken account of local, regional, and national needs and strategic priorities, for the years ahead: 2026 – 2040. Since LTP3 was agreed, the Peninsula Sub National Transport Body was formed and includes Cornwall Council, Devon County Council, Somerset Council, Torbay Council and Plymouth City Council; this body supports the delivery of strategic transport priorities across the peninsula.

LTP4 has been informed by the aims and actions of the Vision Zero South West, and recommendations within the Devon Carbon Plan, as well as the key objectives and priorities of the following Peninsula strategies:

- freight,
- rural transport
- rail across the region

The draft LTP4 aims to ensure transport investments support the priorities for creating a better Devon, including:

- Decarbonisation,
- Easier Travel,
- Greater Places for People,
- The Place to be naturally active,
- Unlock Strategic Development, and
- Reliable and Resilient Network

Recognising Devon is a large and varied county, place-based strategies are included for:

- Rural Devon and Market and Coastal Towns,
- Exeter, and
- Growth areas (Barnstaple and Bideford, Heart of Mid Devon, Heart of Teignbridge and Plymouth Urban fringe)

The objectives of LTP4 include:

- To support clean economic growth through integrated planning, improving transport links within and between growth areas and using technology to widen connectivity carbon emissions.
- To support reaching net zero carbon emissions by 2050 at the latest through reducing the need to travel, shifting trips to sustainable transport options, and using technology and innovation to reduce emissions.
- To enhance and protect all people's health and well-being through facilitating active and safe travel, improving air quality, conserving Devon's natural environment and strengthening sense of place.
- To provide accessible transport choices, through promotion of well-integrated, inclusive, and reliable transport options for residents and visitors in both rural and urban communities.

Discussion & further recommendations for inclusion in the draft LTP4 ahead of public consultation:

- made explicit the interdependency of LTP4 with the Electric Vehicle Strategy;
- additional clarification of phrases such as 'Active Travel';
- a specific focus on an integrated programme of travel within the priority 'easier travel'.

Other notable points of discussion included:

- The interconnections between the priorities, e.g. accessible transport requires it to be reliant and resilient. Members also noted the importance of accessible transport for people with disabilities.

- Access to out-of-town retail and employment areas can be challenging via public transport (time); improvements will be considered as part of the place-based strategies.
- The interdependency of LTP4 and the Electric Vehicle Strategy and the need to raise the profile of the Electric Vehicle Strategy. Members raised the need for more universal electric charging points, the distance between charging amongst other points. Feedback from Members will be shared with the Implementation Group.
- Language needs to be consistent and well understood e.g., Active Travel needs to be explained.
- 'Easier transport' needs to emphasise the importance of the connections between transport, particularly in a large County e.g., cycle routes with bus and train stations.